

six miles below Kinston. The regiment was placed in some old breastworks on the margin of a swamp, about a hundred yards from the creek. Our pickets were stationed on the creek. The next day the enemy made their appearance on the other side of the stream and established a line of skirmishers and sharpshooters. During the day our skirmishers were engaged and occasionally a minie ball would whistle over the breastworks as each individual boy of the regiment believed, "just by my ear." On the morning of 8 March, General Hoke, whose troops were also stationed along the line of the creek, was relieved by the arrival of D. H. Hill's troops. Hoke's Division crossed the creek and made a detour down the lower Trent road which crossed the British road at Wise's Fork, about three miles in our front. The lower Trent road runs in a southeasterly direction to Trenton. The British road runs in a northeasterly direction towards the river. General Hoke with his usual dash surprised a Federal brigade, captured it and sent it to the rear. The reserves held the breastworks throughout the 8th. On the morning of the 9th, the reserves crossed Southwest creek on an improvised bridge constructed by them about 200 yards above the bridge on the Dover road which had been destroyed. This bridge was made by felling trees across the creek and covering them with lumber taken from Jackson's mill in the vicinity. Line of battle was formed on the east side of the creek on swampy ground and the brigade was ordered forward under fire through fallen trees, brush, brambles, and bullets—making it difficult to preserve the alignment. They advanced as steadily as veterans driving the enemy who were fresh troops from New Bern, well dressed, well fed, well armed and well liquored, as was evidenced by the condition of some prisoners captured. The Third Regiment suffered the loss of a number of brave officers and men, among them Lieutenant John W. Harper, a gallant young officer of Company C, from Caldwell. Here also Lieutenant Hamlin was wounded in the arm. That night General Hoke undertook a flank movement down the British road and the Neuse river road, the Junior Reserves being a part of his command. We could plainly hear the enemy at work on their fortifications. The night was